

Sub 1 > 1. (Amended) An intake system of an internal combustion engine, comprising:

a collector fixedly connected directly to either of a side wall of a cylinder head and a collector mounting bracket hermetically covering perimeters of intake-port opening end portions of a plurality of intake ports opening through the side wall;

a plurality of intake-manifold branches respectively communicating with the plurality of intake ports and protruded into an interior space of the collector;

a variable valve actuation system that continuously variably adjusts a valve lift characteristic of an intake valve, the variable valve actuation system comprising a first variable valve actuation mechanism capable of continuously variably adjusting the working angle and the lift of the intake valve;

a control unit configured to be electronically connected to the variable valve actuation system for variably controlling an intake-air quantity through the variable valve actuation system; wherein

the first variable valve actuation mechanism comprising a drive shaft, an eccentric cam driven by the drive shaft, a first link fitted to an outer periphery of the eccentric cam to permit relative rotation of the first link to the eccentric cam, a control shaft arranged parallel to the drive shaft having a control cam whose axis is eccentric to an axis of the control shaft, a rocker arm fitted to an outer periphery of the control cam to permit relative rotation of the rocker arm to the control cam and connected at one end to the first link so that an oscillating motion of the rocker arm is produced through the first link, and a rockable cam rotatably supported on the drive shaft, and connected to the other end of the rocker arm via a second link, and being in abutted-engagement with a valve lifter of the intake valve so that the valve lifter is pushed by cam action of the rockable cam oscillating through the rocker arm; and wherein the working angle and the lift of the intake valve are simultaneously adjusted by varying a center of rotation of the control cam of the control shaft.

a² Sub 9. (Amended) The intake system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a pressure control valve located upstream of the collector connected to each of the intake ports to create a vacuum needed for the engine.

a³ Sub 14. (Amended) The intake system as claimed in claim 1, wherein; in a middle load range an intake valve open timing of the intake valve is set to be phase-retarded with respect to an exhaust valve closure timing.

a⁴ Sub 20. (Amended) The intake system as claimed in claim 1, wherein: the variable valve actuation system further comprises a second variable valve actuation mechanism capable of continuously variably adjusting a phase of a central angle of the working angle of the intake valve.

Please add the following new claims:

a⁵ Sub 21. (New) An intake system of an internal combustion engine, comprising; a collector fixedly connected directly to either of a side wall of a cylinder head and a collector mounting bracket hermetically covering perimeters of intake-port opening end portions of a plurality of intake ports opening through the side wall;

a plurality of intake-manifold branches respectively communicating with the plurality of intake ports and protruded into an interior space of the collector; and

a recessed portion provided to avoid an interference between the collector and a fuel injection valve that injects fuel spray into an associated one of the intake ports.

22. (New) An intake system of an internal combustion engine, comprising:

a collector fixedly connected directly to either of a side wall of a cylinder head and a collector mounting bracket hermetically covering perimeters of intake-port opening end portions of a plurality of intake ports opening through the side wall;

a plurality of intake-manifold branches respectively communicating with the plurality of intake ports and protruded into an interior space of the collector; wherein

a major part of each of the intake-manifold branches being located inside the collector.

23. (New) An intake system of an internal combustion engine, comprising:

a collector fixedly connected directly to either of a side wall of a cylinder head and a collector mounting bracket hermetically covering perimeters of intake-port opening end portions of a plurality of intake ports opening through the side wall;

a plurality of intake-manifold branches respectively communicating with the plurality of intake ports and protruded into an interior space of the collector; and

a pressure control valve located upstream of the collector to adjust a vacuum pressure in the collector to a predetermined constant pressure value.

24. (New) An intake system according to claim 21, wherein the recessed portion extends around two opposite sides and the top of the fuel injection valve.

25. (New) An intake system according to claim 22, wherein the major part of each of the intake-manifold branches extends around a portion of the collector mounting bracket.

26. (New) An intake system according to claims 23, wherein during full load operation of the engine, an opening degree of the pressure control valve is increased and the pressure control valve is operated at its full-open operating mode so that a vacuum in the collector is reduced to a minimum.